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ABSTRACT

NERIS (National Educational Resources Information Service) is a database service that uses a computer at the Open University to provide curriculum information and learning materials to educational users throughout the United Kingdom. Two handbooks on the NERIS system are included in this document. "NERIS: An Introduction" provides an overview of the system, including information on the kinds of materials in the database, hardware requirements, accessing the system, and future levels of development, including enhancements that will enable users to conduct more specific searches. Appendixes provide a list of NERIS publications (including an information disk, tutorial software, and a user handbook) and a glossary. "NERIS Videotex Search Guide" provides an extended introduction to the system and illustrated guidelines for conducting both basic and extended searches, saving and downloading records, interacting with the system, disconnecting from the database, and using saved NERIS records. (GL)

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NERIS

AN INTRODUCTION

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NERIS AN INTRODUCTION

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The NERIS development team gratefully acknowledges the help of many people and organisations in the preparation of the NERIS database and associated materials. Without the help of these people the development could not have been implemented with such speed.

The Industry/Education Unit of the Department of Trade and Industry.

British Telecom.

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The Open University Management Services department.

PRESTEL Education.

The Times Network System.

The Chief Education Officers of Bedfordshire, Leicestershire and Oxfordshire.

The teachers, librarians and lecturers from fourteen local education authorities who helped to trial the Level One system.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended to provide a brief overview of the NERIS development. It has been written against the background of a system that is being created to meet a growing demand for curriculum information and materials from schools and other educational establishments.

The National Educational Resources Information Service is a computerised **on-line educational database** of curriculum materials and information. The idea for its development stems from a two-fold desire to provide teachers with a single point of reference that will enable them to identify **learning materials** located in a multitude of sources and, secondly, from a concern to create a system capable of delivering up-to-date or little known materials directly into schools. The initial development phases are funded by the Industry/Education Unit of the Department of Trade and Industry whose interest started with a concern to provide industry-related teaching materials in the areas of mathematics and science in secondary schools. The creation of a national database of curriculum materials and information was seen as a logical extension of previous DTI schemes which placed microelectronics equipment and software into schools.

The NERIS development team is based in Woburn on the edge of Milton Keynes within easy reach of the Open University where the mainframe computer that holds the NERIS database is located. The Open University is also the base for the ECCTIS database with whom joint development work is undertaken and whose expertise has enabled the NERIS development to make rapid progress.

The type of information and material stored in the NERIS database varies according to its nature and copyright status. If learning materials are copyright free, or the author has given the appropriate permission, then materials will be stored in their entirety and made available for **downloading**. This can apply to textual materials, graphics or computer software (files and programs). The downloading process transfers the files to the users microcomputer for subsequent use, e.g. printing or viewing on screen. For copyright materials or those of a commercial nature,

bibliographic information is provided. All information is stored and presented in a common record format and all records can be downloaded.

Access to NERIS is being developed in stages, the first of which will cater for users who are unfamiliar with computer **information retrieval** systems. Known as **NERIS LEVEL ONE**, this is attractive to view and easy to use. It is a **viewdata service** which looks like other viewdata services such as **PRESTEL, CEEFAX** and **ORACLE** but which operates in a much more powerful fashion. It will be available, initially, to subscribers to PRESTEL Education and **The Times Network System (TTNS)**. Subsequently, a direct access facility will be implemented to allow schools access without having to pass through these other services.

In order to assist users who may not be familiar with some of the terms used in this booklet, glossary items have been highlighted when they first appear in the text.

NERIS LEVEL ONE SYSTEM

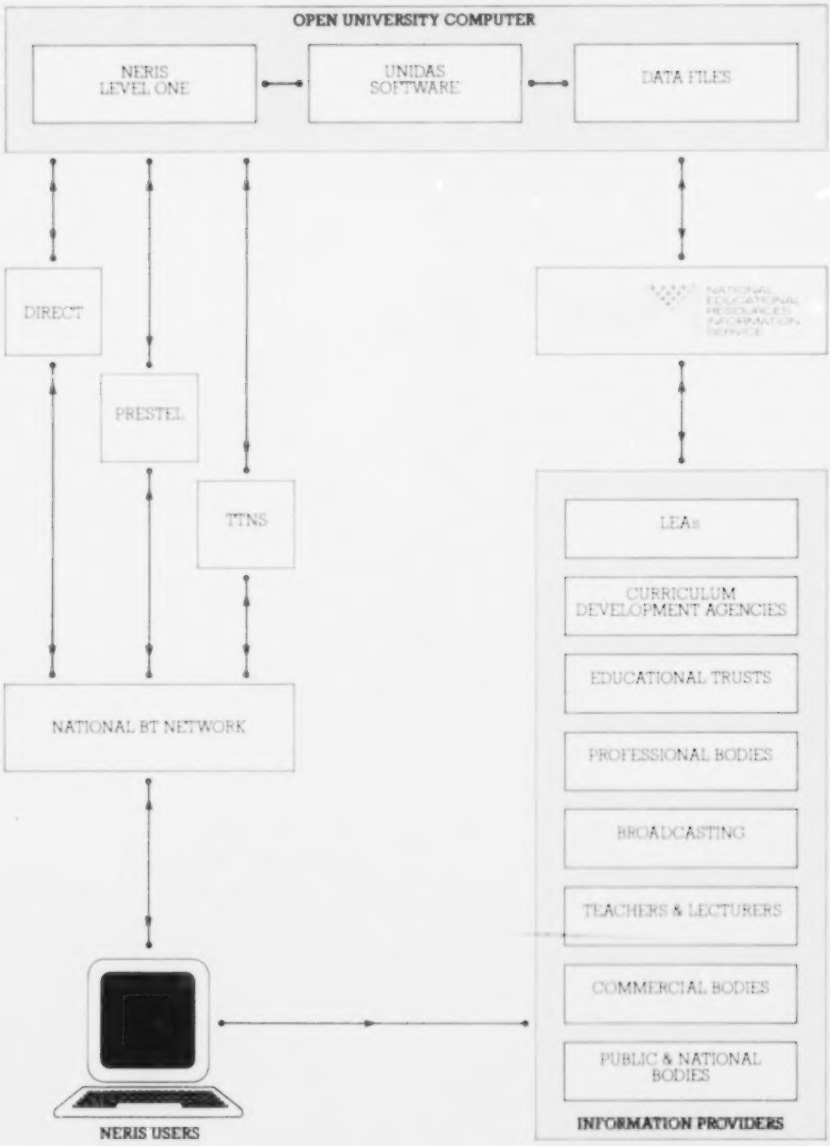


Fig 1

2 THE NERIS SYSTEM

2.1 An overview of the system

The NERIS system is made up of five components, the users, the **information providers,** the NERIS development team, the systems for accessing the database and the Open University computer. Figure 1 provides a simple summary of the main components and their relationship one to another.

NERIS is designed to meet the needs of those who require access to curriculum information and materials. In addition to teachers and lecturers in schools and colleges this includes those involved in curriculum development at local and national level.

From the outset, NERIS has attempted to build a network of information providers. It is intended that this will become a dynamic system which will, on the one hand, change to meet the needs of users, whilst maintaining certain elements which will guarantee the continuity of **data input** and updating. Information about information providers will be available from the database by entering the word NERIS as a search term. This will result in the retrieval of a number of records giving information about the system including a list of the current information providers.

NERIS records are held on one of the Open University computers. Viewdata search facilities are provided by software held on the mainframe computer and written specifically for NERIS. This allows inexperienced users to **access** a very powerful information retrieval system called UNIDAS without having to learn any complicated procedures.

In order to meet the needs of its users, NERIS is happy to receive suggestions relating to individual records, topics or files that might be made available. You are invited to comment by filling in **response frames,** by letter, by **electronic mail** (TTNS TCD100861, PRESTEL 052525364) or by using the comment slips provided with this guide.

2.2 What sort of materials and information will be held in NERIS?

(a) The scope of the material held on the database.

Initially there will be a concentration on four curriculum areas, Mathematics, Science, Geography and Social & Personal Development. As the database expands, **datafiles** will be included to cover the whole curriculum. Whilst the initial focus will be on materials and information for secondary schools, this will not mean, that other phases of education will be excluded. As the NERIS development proceeds, the amount of information held for other ages phases, including pre school, infant and post 16, will increase. This process will be gradual and will reflect the growth in the network of information providers as well as the requirements of teachers and others involved in curriculum development.

(b) What information is contained in a NERIS Record?

Information about each item of learning material is held on a NERIS record. Potentially, these records can each contain the following information.

1 BIBLIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Title	. . as published.
Media	. . e.g. audio or visual material.
Series	. . of which it is a part.
Author	. . or editor, designer, producer, etc.
Publisher	. . including teacher groups and LEAs.
Published	. . date of publication or transmission in the case of broadcast material.

2 DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

Contents	. . a short paragraph desribing the educational content of the material. This may include sub-headings such as examination group, ability level or teaching style.
Related Terms	. . a list of words or phrases that are related to the record. If used as topics in a search they may retrieve other useful items related to this material. These are not the only search terms for this record.

Age Phase	The age phase for which the authors developed the material.

3 **AVAILABILITY**

Availability	Gives details of how to obtain or preview the materials. It may include a phone number and additional information where appropriate. In the case of a location, details useful when planning an educational visit are given. Where the name of a person appears on a contact list, the relevant information regarding their availability to speak to groups, the contact address and any qualifying conditions are given.

4 **COMMENTS**

Comments	This can be used by teachers and others who have used particular materials on the database to add constructive comments or case studies which might be helpful to others. It is also used to set out reviews of materials.

5 **ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

Datafile	The name of the datafile to which the record belongs.
Ref No.	The reference number given to the material by the information provider.
ISBN	The standard ISB number for the material where available.
Dewey No.	The Dewey Classification where appropriate.
Entered	The date the record was entered on the database.
Updated	The date the record was updated.

6 **TEXT**

Text	For short items, this part may be the full resource. If the material is extensive a summary or abstract will be included here, the full text of the

	material appearing in Part 7 of the record.

7 EXTENSION

Text Extension	This may contain teaching material in its entirety if it is in excess of two pages of A4. It may also be used to hold tabular or graphic materials, computer data files or computer programs or any other encoded data.

When carrying out searches, the NERIS software only looks at certain parts of each record. These parts (10 to 15) contain **descriptors** or **search** terms that have been assigned to each record by the information providers in co-operation with the NERIS development team. They are arranged as shown below:

DESCRIPTORS

10 Title	The full title and / or the most significant words from the title.
11 Content	Important words describing aims and objectives, curriculum subjects, topics, ability levels, skills and concepts, etc.
12 Age Phase	The phase names are pre school, infant, junior, secondary, post 16. These are taken from an authorised list.
13 Media	The types of media are subdivided into; printed, visual, audio, computer, people, places, equipment and multi media pack. In levels two and three these may then be further subdivided into detailed terms such as slides, worksheets, etc. These are taken from an authorised list.
14 Author	The surname and initials of the author
15 Publisher	The publisher's name in full and in any commonly abbreviated form.

Not all the parts of each record can be displayed at all levels of searching. For instance, at Level One parts five, seven and the descriptors (10 to 15) are not displayed. However, if you choose to download a record for subsequent printing the entire record, excluding the descriptors and part five, will be available to you.

The descriptors will be available for viewing during the early phases of NERIS in the form of a word list. Subsequently, a structured thesaurus containing search terms linked to records in the database will be developed.

2.3 What do I need to use NERIS?

In simple terms, you will need a microcomputer linked to a disc drive, a monitor, a telephone line and a modem. The computer will also need some software that allows it to communicate with the NERIS computer. For **Levels One and Two** software capable of accessing a viewdata system is required, whereas at **Level Three** the software will need to talk to an 80 character terminal system. You will also need a copy of the MARVEL software supplied freely by NERIS to allow you to print out any records you download. A list of compatible computer software and computer hardware, including modems, is supplied with the NERIS user handbook for the Level One searching system. This list is subject to amendment and updates will be available from NERIS on request.

A separate telephone line is desirable but not essential. It is possible to use telephone lines connected through most switchboards.

Figure 2 shows the system in a simplified form, with your computer communicating with the NERIS computer at the Open University in Milton Keynes using the British Telecom telephone network. As the diagram shows, if you are a subscriber to either Prestel Education of The Times Network System you are able to gain access to NERIS using a **gateway** from these systems. In both cases you will be able to connect to the computer holding the NERIS database by passing through this gateway. In effect, this allows you to move easily from one computer to another and back again.

2.4 How do I contact NERIS using the computer?

Ultimately there will be three ways in which the NERIS database can be contacted using your computer system and modem. The first two currently available are via PRESTEL and The Times Network System (TTNS). The third method, known as direct access does not require the

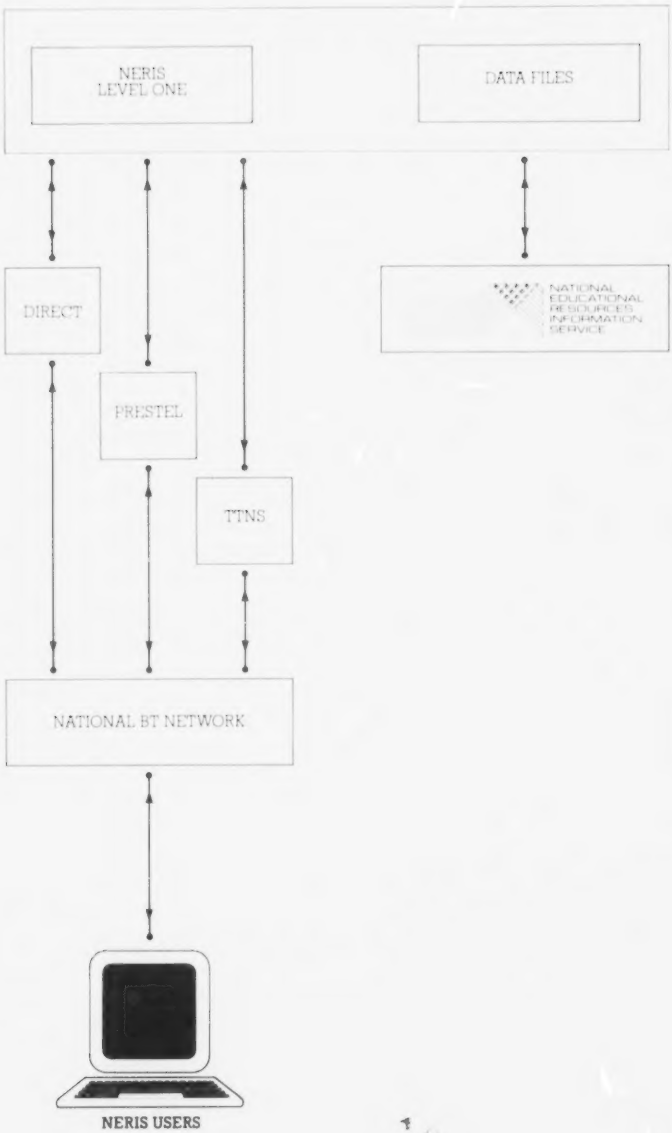

NERIS
LEVEL ONE
DATA FILES
DIRECT
PRESTEL
TTNS
NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION SERVICE
NATIONAL BT NETWORK
NERIS USERS

Fig 2

facilities of these systems and will be available later in the NERIS development.

(a) Using PRESTEL.

Dial your local PRESTEL number and enter your identity number and password. Once you have reached the main menu page type

[*] [N] [E] [R] [I] [S] (press #)

NERIS is also available from the main index of Prestel Education by typing the number alonside the entry for NERIS. This takes you to an introductory page and then to the gateway page.

If for any reason you are not registered for the use of keywords with PRESTEL or you cannot find the menu option for NERIS, the NERIS gateway page can be found by typing

[*] [8] [8] [8] [1] [8] [8] [8] [4] (press #)

At the gateway page follow the instructions to use the service. i.e. (press #)

(b) Using TTNS

Once you have **logged on** to TTNS and have the > prompt on the screen, you can find the connection to NERIS by typing:

[>] [N] [E] [R] [I] [S] (press return)

and the message, establishing connection will appear.

If this facility is not available to you, you can find the NERIS database by selecting the appropriate option to take you on to the TTNS national database (DATAB). having selected the NERIS option you will be taken to an introductory page. Follow the instructions to connect to the NERIS database.

The message establishing connection will appear before the connection is made. Once connected to NERIS, instructions on screen will guide you into using the system.

(c) Using the direct form of access.

In simple terms, this will involve dialling a local telephone call charge number and having a relevant password and number to type in when requested. Once connected, you will then be linked to the Open University computer. The exact details of access using this method will be published when the service becomes available.

Whichever method you use to connect to the NERIS database you will be welcomed by a screen that looks like this,

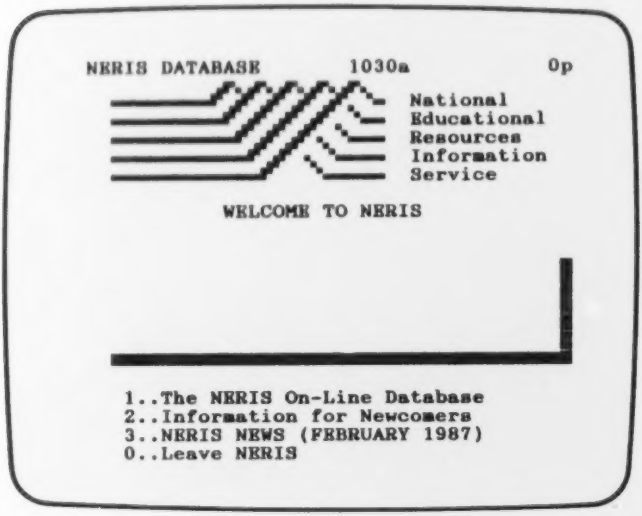


Fig 3

Whilst information is provided on the database to enable you to carry out searches, you may feel that you require additional help. A guide to searching the NERIS database using the Level One system is available from NERIS.

2.5 How much does NERIS cost?

If access to NERIS is to be made via PRESTEL or TTNS, the appropriate subscription will be required. The financial implications for the direct form of access will be announced once this facility is available.

NERIS makes no charge to the user for the information held on the database or the number of pages viewed or unloaded.

3 FUTURE NERIS DEVELOPMENTS

This first edition of the introduction is published at the same time as the release of the NERIS LEVEL ONE system. This term is used to describe the easy access method to the database. In creating it every effort has been made to design a system that is as near failure proof as possible. It is envisaged that many users will wish to move from this introductory system once they become familiar with it and require more facilities. To enable this to happen, two further levels are under development. These are known as LEVELS TWO and THREE. Set out below is a basic description of these levels and the facilities it is envisaged they will include.

3.1 The Level Two System.

This will follow the same format as Level One in that it will be a videotext system using 40 character screens. However, it will provide enhancements to the Level One system and will operate alongside it. These enhancements will include the facility to

(a) search an number of areas of interest,

(b) refine the media search,
(c) refine the audience search,
(d) search on the DATAFILE names that make up the total NERIS database,

(e) search for newly added records in a specific datafile.

As a result, Level Two will enable users to conduct very detailed and specific searches.

It will use the same **communications software** as the present Level One.

It will be available via PRESTEL and TTNS as well as the direct form of access.

3.2 The Level Three System

Level Three will be quite separate from the other two levels in that it will present an 80 character screen display. It will be available via direct access, and if developments at their

respective computers can handle NERIS' needs via PRESTEL and TTNS. A different type of communications software will be needed for your computer. This will need to handle 80 characters on one line of the screen, not just 40 as with viewdata.

The search facilities will be very powerful and will match those of the large commercial databases.

3.3 CD-ROM

With a view to future requirements, notably to allow searching locally without using on-line systems, the NERIS development team are currently working with colleagues at the ECCTIS database and the Open University to develop a Compact Disc version of the database. It will be some time before this facility can be made generally available and more information will be provided as the development proceeds.

4 APPENDICES

4.1 NERIS publications

In order to help users make the best use of NERIS, a number of publications have been produced. These may be obtained by completing the response frame on the NERIS system, or by letter which should be sent to the address below: NERIS Publications Dept
c/o Maryland College,
Leighton Street,
Woburn,
MILTON KEYNES
MK17 9JD

Publications currently available are:

INFORMATION DISC

This provides information about the complete system and indicates the scope of intended developments, sample records as for Level One, methods of access and detail of the NERIS record structure.

Available for BBC 40 track, 80 track discs
RML 480Z Double Density disc.
RML Nimbus disc. This runs using
RML BBCBASIC.

PRICE £3.00

TUTORIAL SOFTWARE

A suite of programs to allow users to become familiar with the NERIS system without having to use the telephone. The software searches a small number of records and follows exactly the methods of the live on-line system.

Available for BBC 40 track, 80 track discs
RM Nimbus disc. This runs using
RML BBCBASIC

PRICE £3.00

If both Information disc and Tutorial software are purchased together, the combined price is £5.50. Both qualify for The Department of Trade and Industry Software scheme.

LEVEL ONE USER HANDBOOK

A comprehensive guide to using the Level One NERIS system to find learning materials and information about materials. The guide is tutorial in nature and includes many illustrations to help those unfamiliar with computer systems and databases.

AVAILABLE FREE OF CHARGE

4.2 Glossary

Some of the terms used in this Introduction may be unfamiliar. The following are a few simple explanations to help you to understand the working of the NERIS system. They are not meant to be definitive.

ACCESS The technical term given to the process where a microcomputer communicates with another computer.

CEEFAX The British Broadcasting Corporation's Teletext service that is available to those who have suitable television sets or microcomputers. It carries news and information.

CD-ROM Stands for Compact Disc Read Only Memory and is a device that uses a compact disc to store computer information. In simple terms, the compact disc and player replace the traditional magnetic disc and drive. The advantage being that the compact disc can hold much much more data.

COMMUNICATIONS SOFTWARE Communications or 'comms' software are computer programs that allow your microcomputer to communicate with other computers using the telephone lines and a modem.

DATA INPUT The process of entering the NERIS records onto the Open University computer. It can include computerised transfer of data, the creation of records on paper or the use of data input forms.

DATAFILES The name given to groups of records stored on the NERIS database that have been prepared by the same Information Provider.

DESCRIPTORS The words used only by the system to search for specific records. They are assigned to each record by information providers in association with NERIS. They enable the system to search for records quickly.

DOWNLOADING The process which transfers records to the user's microcomputer from the NERIS computer. Once stored on the user's disc, these records can be printed or prepared to be read by a wordprocessor using software supplied by NERIS.

ELECTRONIC MAIL The sending of messages via computers, for example as provided by PRESTEL and The Times Network System.

GATEWAY The term for the connection by telephone of two or more mainframe computers. A gateway enables the users of one system to communicate with other systems.

GATEWAY PAGE This is the last page on one of the mainframe computers before transfer by telephone to the other mainframe computer.

INFORMATION PROVIDER An individual, teacher group, LEA, curriculum development agency or company that provides information for the NERIS database. Information Providers are not permitted to use the database for advertising and have to present their information in a standard format.

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL Information Retrieval is usually undertaken by computers or microcomputers and involves searching information held on computers to find matches between the user's question and the information held.

LEARNING MATERIALS For the purposes of the NERIS database, Learning Materials are defined as materials used in the teaching or learning process. They can include items such as teaching kits, data sheets, pupil assignments or

worksheets. Audio-visual materials are included as well as people and places with educational potential and equipment.

LEVEL ONE This is the easiest method of searching the NERIS database. It is a good starting point for users who have not searched NERIS before or for those who do not use the service regularly.

LEVEL TWO Level Two represents an enhancement to Level One giving the user more powerful searching facilities.

LEVEL THREE This is the highest level of searching facilities available to NERIS users. It will be very powerful and flexible.

LOGGED ON Being logged on-means that your microcomputer is communicating with another computer, often a mainframe computer.

ON LINE DATABASE A bank of information that can be searched and communicated with by microcomputers using telephone lines and modems.

ORACLE The ITV Teletext service that is available to those with suitable television sets or microcomputers. It carries news and information.

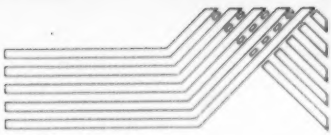
PRESTEL The British Telecom viewdata service providing database and electronic mail facilities to commercial and educational users. Educational subscribers are provided for by PRESTEL Education.

RESPONSE FRAMES These are screens that are sent by the system to the NERIS once they have been completed by the user.

SEARCH TERMS Another term in the NERIS database for descriptors.

THE TIMES NETWORK SYSTEM Often abbreviated to TTNS, this provides both electronic mail and database facilities to its subscribers.

VIEWDATA SERVICE A computer system that provides screens of information to other computers or microcomputers that are communicating with it. The format is 40 characters across the screen by 24 lines down, using block or chunky graphics, and up to eight colours.



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NERIS VIDEOTEX SEARCH GUIDE

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NERIS VIDEOTEX SEARCH GUIDE

AUGUST 1988

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The screen pictures in this handbook were correct at the time of printing. NERIS reserves the right to change the appearance of screens, the facilities and services offered, without consultation in order to provide a better service for its users.

The notes in BOLD refer to the use of this guide with the NERIS tutorial software packages.

Throughout the tutorial software you may press the ESCAPE key for help.

The NERIS tutorial software is available from NERIS or on licence to Education Authorities.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is NERIS

NERIS is a database service that uses a computer at the Open University to provide curriculum information and learning materials to educational users throughout the United Kingdom.

It was set up with funding from the Department of Trade & Industry through its Industry/Education Unit with a brief to undertake the following:

- create a database capable of holding information or complete items of teaching materials.
- design a number of search systems that allow people with different levels of expertise to use the database.
- draw together a network of organisations and individuals to contribute learning materials and curriculum information to the database.
- produce an electronic means of delivering information and learning resources using existing technology.
- investigate more advanced technologies that might be used to provide schools and others with this type of service more effectively in the future.

1.2 What does NERIS offer its users?

- A single source of reference for curriculum information and materials scattered around the UK.
- An information service that includes a comprehensive range of learning media.
- Detailed information about materials, including extracts and abstracts in addition to full bibliographic details and advice on how to preview or obtain them.
- Complete items of learning materials including text, graphics, statistics and computer datafiles.
- Access to large quantities of copyright free material.
- Information about people and places with potential as educational resources.
- The facility to save information and materials to disc in addition to saving and printing individual screens.
- The facility to automatically convert material saved to disc into a format that enables them to be altered by word-processing.

1.3 What do I need to use NERIS?

In basic terms, you will need a microcomputer linked to a disc drive, monitor, a telephone line and a modem. To communicate with the NERIS Videotex system, software capable of accessing a "Viewdata or Videotex system" is required. A dedicated telephone line is desirable but not essential as it is possible to use telephone lines connected through most switchboards. To use NERIS to its maximum potential you will also need a printer and a copy of the MARVEL software developed by NERIS to enable you to print or adapt records you save to disc.

A modem and telephone line are not required for the NERIS tutorial software.

1.4 How do I contact the database?

There are three ways in which the NERIS database can be contacted using your computer system and modem. Users of PRESTEL, PRESTEL Education and TTNS (The Times Network Systems) have access to the NERIS database as part of their subscriptions. For those users who are not members of either service a system known as 'Direct Access' is available. This is administrated by co-ordinators nominated by Education Authorities throughout the United Kingdom. The names of local co-ordinators are available from NERIS.

This section briefly describes how to contact the NERIS database by each of these three methods.

(i) Using PRESTEL or PRESTEL Education

Dial your local PRESTEL Education telephone number and enter your identity number and password. Once you have reached the main menu page type

[*] [N] [E] [R] [I] [S] press #

This will take you to an introductory page and then to the gateway page. When the message at the bottom of the gateway page changes to 'Connection Established – press any key', following this instruction will connect you to NERIS. Once connected, instructions on screen will guide you into the system. In the event of failure to establish a connection it is worth waiting a few seconds and trying again. If this does not result in a successful connection you are recommended to try again at another time.

NERIS is also available from the main index of Prestel Education.

(ii) Using TTNS

Ensure that you logon to TTNS in 40 character mode (i.e. coms codes are configured to B 2100) using TTNS software 2.3 or later versions.

Once logged on to TTNS you can find the gateway to NERIS by selecting the DATAB option to take you to the TTNS national database. Select the RESOURCES option on the first menu page and the NERIS option from subsequent menu pages. Follow the on-screen instructions to connect to the NERIS database.

A message will appear indicating that the connection is being established. Once connected to NERIS, instructions on screen will guide you into the system. In the event of failure to establish a connection it is worth waiting a few seconds and trying again. If this does not result in a successful connection you are recommended to try again at another time.

(iii) Using Direct Access

A local call charge telephone number connects your computer to the British Telecom private data network. A common NERIS identity number 8888888888, followed by a password of 8888 is entered to identify you as a non subscription service user. A screen displays a menu of services. Select the NERIS option and then press 1 to move to the gateway page. When the message at the bottom of the gateway page changes to 'Connection Established – press any key', press any key to connect to NERIS. Once your call has been connected to the Open University computer you will be asked for your NERIS identity number and password. Once connected to NERIS, instructions on screen will guide you into the system. In the event of failure to establish a connection it is worth waiting a few seconds and trying again. If this does not result in a successful connection you are recommended to try again at another time.

Direct Access passwords and identity numbers are obtained from an LEA Co-ordinator, whose name is available from NERIS. Detailed instructions on the use of this form of access are available when passwords are allocated.

This is not applicable to users of the tutorial software.

1.5 This handbook

This handbook has been designed to help you to become familiar with the NERIS VIDEOTEX Service. A videotex service is one that provides information in 40 character screens using up to eight colours. It allows the user to search the NERIS database for information about curriculum materials. Two search methods are available to cater for different groups of users. For users who are new to NERIS, or those who do not use NERIS often, the Basic Search System provides a means of locating information without any previous knowledge of database retrieval methods. It is easy to use and will provide an introduction to the more complex and powerful Extended Search System.

Once you have mastered the Basic System or when your demands increase you will find it more appropriate to move on to the Extended Search System. Both the Basic and Extended methods of searching are supported with extensive help facilities on screen.

Using this handbook in advance of going on-line or in conjunction with your first searches will help you to use the systems to their greatest effect. To save both time and money on telephone charges it is recommended that you gain familiarity with both systems by using the NERIS Tutorial Software that mirrors all the major features of the on-line systems.

Throughout the tutorial software you can press the ESCAPE or ESC key to get help.

2

SEARCHING THE NERIS DATABASE

This guide provides you with a step by step set of instructions that will enable you to use the database successfully. Little or nothing will be assumed. If you need to press a key, including # , this will be shown. You should therefore only press the key(s) shown either on the screen or as set out in this guide.

It is imperative that in order to achieve efficient use of the database the instructions at the bottom of each page (blue writing on yellow background) are used to move about the system. It is NOT recommended that you use the * commands that are a feature of other videotex systems like PRESTEL. NERIS displays pages in videotex but is NOT a standard videotex system and therefore commands such as * 9 0 or * 0# can effect the continuity of service, as can page jumping.

Welcome to NERIS

The tutorial software begins here.

When you reach the database you will be greeted by a welcome page that looks like this:

The central area of the page is a notice or bulletin board. This is used by NERIS to provide important information about the service. This may direct you to new material on the database or provide information relating to times when the service will not be available when these are known in advance.

This page provides four options from which to select your next step.

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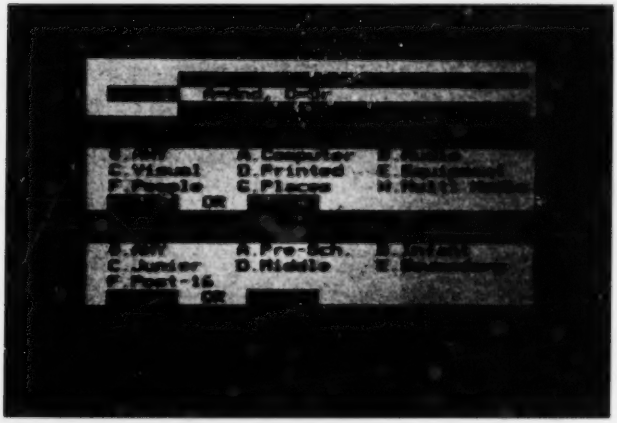
Pressing	1	will take you into the NERIS database so that you can make searches, using the Basic Search System.
	2	will take you into the NERIS database so that you can make searches using the Extended Search System.
	3	will take you to pages of information, that will help you to get the best out of the two search systems that are available.
	4	will take you to the pages of NERIS News.
	0	allows you to leave NERIS.

2.1 The Basic Search System

2.1.1 The Search Screen

The Search Screen enables you to build up a search by entering the information you require in a number of boxes. The topics or subjects you wish to search for should be entered in one or both the boxes under Interest Areas. You can broaden your search by linking the terms in the boxes by entering O for OR. To narrow a search link the boxes by entering A for AND. To add Media and Age Phase, you will be asked to type in letters from a menu. The page looks like this:



HELPFUL HINTS

The MINIMUM information that you must enter in order to make a search is one topic or area of interest. The word or words describing this should not exceed 25 characters, i.e. they must fit into the box. They may be entered in upper or lower case or a combination of both.

It is possible to refine a search whilst completing the Search Screen. Here are some rules to help you.

(a) To remove the contents of a box, leaving it blank: press SPACE BAR in the first character position followed by #

(b) To replace content of a box with other letters: just overtype with the new letters.

(c) To go back a box, type: * *

(d) To restart an entry after typing a number of characters type: * *

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2.1.2 Getting HELP

Whilst you are filling in the search screen boxes, you may need some help to clarify what you are being asked to do or what specific terms mean. HELP PAGES are available for this purpose. You can see these by typing:

[*] [2] [2] [#]

They will give you general help about searches and specific help about filling in individual boxes. You can move between the different pages or return to your enquiry by pressing the numbers shown at the bottom of each screen.

Before you start a search you may wish to look at the list of words or topics that the computer recognises. This can be seen by typing:

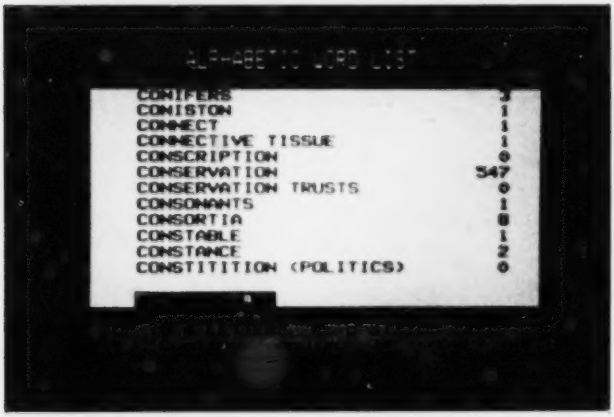
[*] [1] [1] [#]

This will take you into a word list arranged alphabetically. When you first arrive at this list you will find yourself at the start of the alphabet. To move about the word list or to locate a particular word, type in up to the first 6 letters of the word and press # This will take you to a new screen displaying the area of the word list you require.

e.g. typing

[c] [o] [n] [s] [e] [r] [#]

will display words starting with 'conser'.



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From this page you will be able to continue looking at the other parts of the word list either by entering another six letters to find a different area, or by:

Pressing [7] [#] to go back a page

[8] [#] to go forward a page

[9] [#] allows you to return to the Search Screen to modify your search.

Notice that numbers appear to the right of each word in the word list. These indicate the number of documents that will be retrieved if you use a particular word as a search term.

In the tutorial software the numbers of documents retrieved by each word in the word list will be less than those retrieved on the on-line system.

If you select this option (to see the word list) whilst you are building up your initial search, you will have to retype the information when you return to the Search Screen.

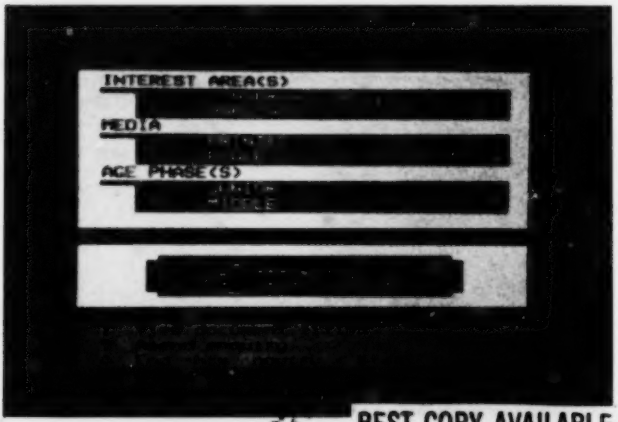
From the Search Screen you may leave the NERIS database by typing:

[*] [9] [9] [#]

and following the instructions on the next screen.

2.1.3 Results of a search

When a search has been made, the screen will clear and a report page appear. This will set out your enquiry and tell you how many documents have been found that match your requirements. It will look like this:



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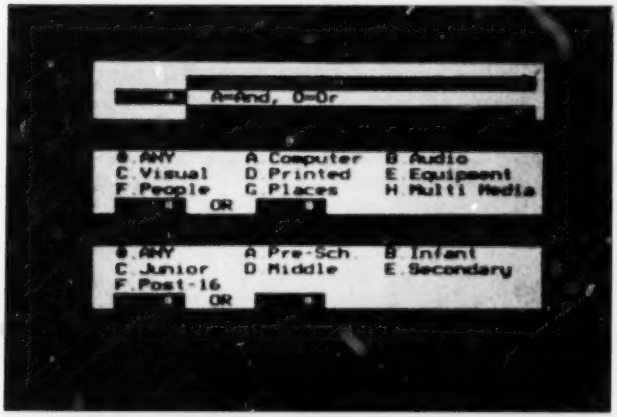
By pressing 1 you will be able to view the titles and the predominant media of each record that has been found.

9 will take you back to the search screen to enable you to amend your enquiry.

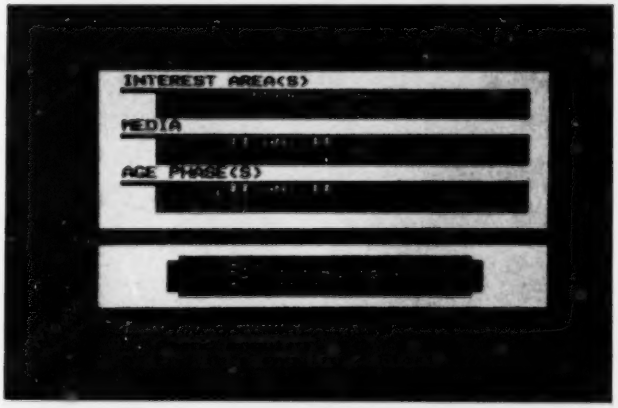
0 allows you to end the enquiry or start another.

2.1.4 A successful search

The screen pictures below show a successful search that was refined and then the resource viewed. The keys that were pressed to move between the screens are shown. Please note that only the first and fourth screen of the titles and the first screen of each record are shown.



Search Information collected and a report presented.



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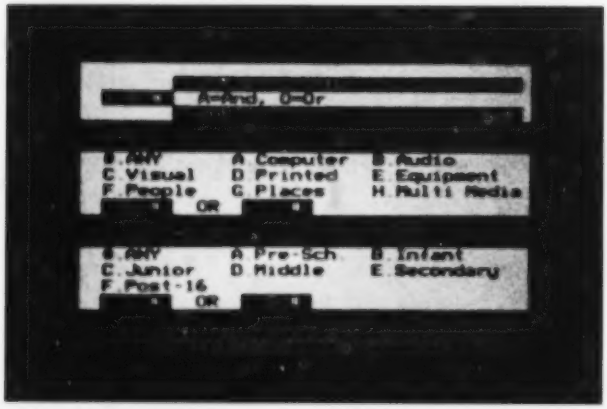
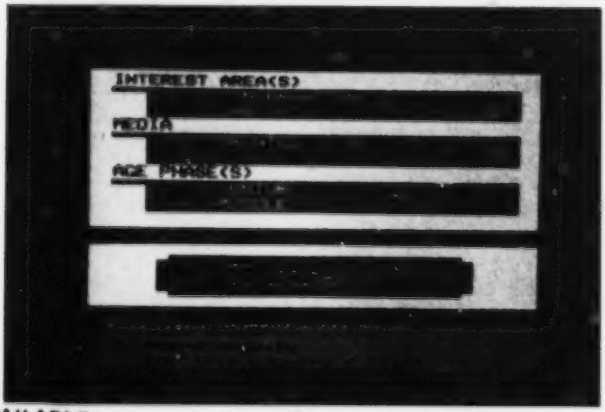
547 records represents far too large a set of records to scan or read through. The search needs to be defined more precisely and this can be done by refining the original search by adding a second search term, and/or specifying particular media and/or age phases for the information required.

Press 9 to amend selections.

In the tutorial software the numbers of documents retrieved by each word in the word list will be less than those retrieved on the on-line system.



Report on amended search shows a manageable retrieved set of documents.



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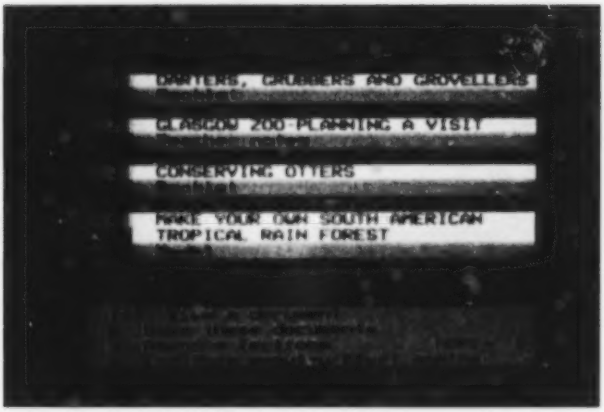
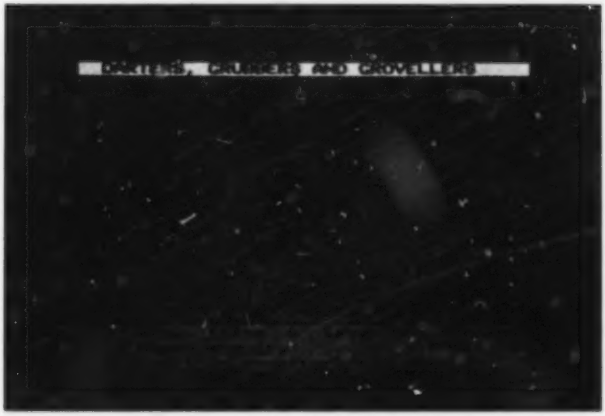
Press [1] to view titles.



In the tutorial software the numbers of documents retrieved by each word will be less than those retrieved on the on-line system.

Records found in the tutorial software will also be found on the on-line system, along with many others.

Press [1] to look at first record.



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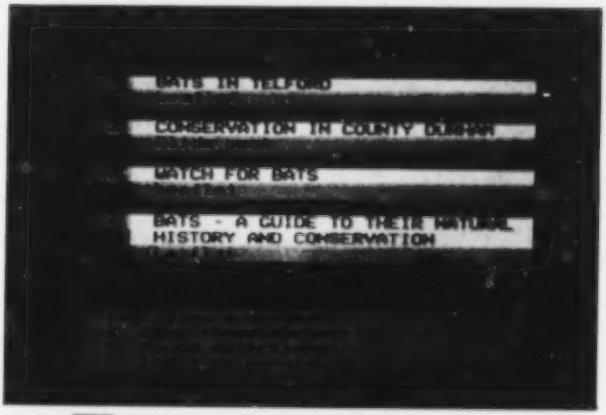
Press [1] for titles (then move to fourth page with 8)



Press [1] to look at the third record.

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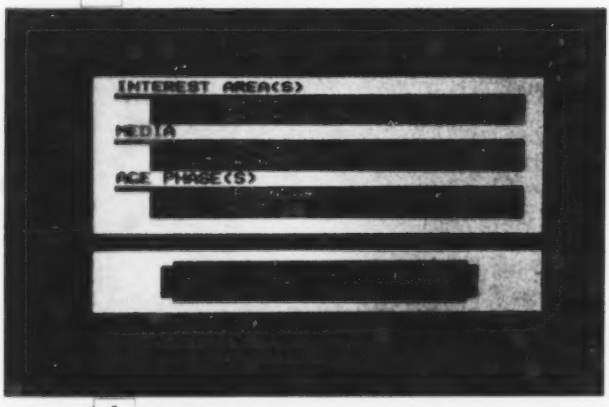
2.1.5 When a search fails

What if a search fails to find anything?

Rather than leave you to guess where you went wrong or to assume that the database contains nothing relating to your enquiry, help is available to enable you to modify your enquiry so as to achieve a measure of success.

When this happens a slightly different report screen is displayed, as below. The option of seeing titles is replaced by an option to:

Press 1 To find out why. (your search has failed).



Press 1 to find out why.

If you select this option, rather than refine your search, you will be shown a screen indicating where your search has been successful and where it failed to find records. For example;

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Why do Searches fail?

Searches may fail for a number of reasons. Typing errors will result in unrecognisable words being presented to the system. These can easily be changed using the amend option. It could be that the topic you requested is not understood or known to the system in which case a message saying this will appear, together with an option to look at the word list.

If you select this option will will be taken into the word list at a point as close as possible to the word you typed. For example a failed enquiry about WATER ABSTRACTION that was unknown to the system would take you into the word list as in the figure below.

From this page you will be able to continue looking at the other parts of the word list either by entering up to the first 6 letters to find a different area, or by;

Pressing

[7] [#] to move back a page.

[8] [#] to move forward a page.

[9] [#] allows you to continue your search.

Any information from your failed search will be re-displayed on the new search screen for you to amend. The word list is compiled from the descriptors or search terms of each record.

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2.2 The Extended Search System

2.2.1 Why an Extended Search System?

When you become proficient in using the Basic Search System, you may find that it does not continue to fulfill your requirements. The Basic system allows you to carry out very broad searches and is particularly good at helping users when their searches have failed. It does have limitations and these become apparent as you attempt to make your searches more specific. The Basic System introduces many of the procedures that are developed further in the Extended System. Its simplicity will help you gain confidence in working on-line.

Whilst this is helpful in the early stages of using NERIS and allows you to become familiar with the NERIS record structure (how the information, about each resource, is stored), more complex searches are not possible as you are limited to two Interest Areas, linked by AND or OR and to broad categories of media and age phase.

Searching for information about Castles in Wales but not Cardiff, because the user lives in Cardiff, is not possible using the Basic System. The user needs to be able to search for

CASTLES (and)

WALES (not)

CARDIFF

When searching for PRINTED media using the basic system, a number of particular items are found e.g. abstract, article, worksheet, datasheet, information sheet etc. You may wish to search for individual items e.g.

WORKSHEET

A similar situation occurs when searching for Age Phase using the basic system. You are only offered broad age bands for example Middle is a combination of Lower Secondary and Upper Junior age groups.

The Extended System allows users to search in detail, combine their searches, and exclude some records by using NOT to link searches. In order to do this the user needs to have some knowledge of the NERIS record structure so that they can instruct the system to search in the correct parts of the records.

A NERIS record contains the following parts.

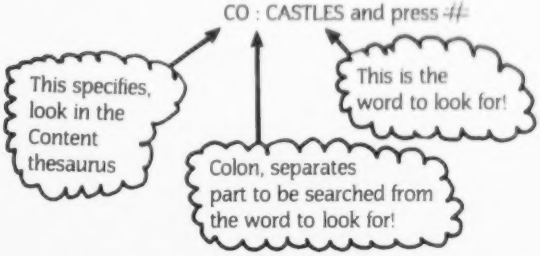
Bibliographic:	Title, Media, Author, Series, Publisher, Year of Publication	Seen on screen using the videotex search systems.
Descriptive:	Content, Related terms Age phase	
Availability:		
Comments:		
Text:		
Extension:		available for downloading only

Different parts of a record may be searched using DESCRIPTORS (or search terms). These are lists of words either taken from a part of the record or assigned to it by indexers. Where descriptors are assigned the vocabulary is determined by NERIS.

The parts of the record that can be searched and their descriptors are as follows.

DESCRIPTORS:	
TITLE:	the significant words from the title, held in an alphabetic word list.
CONTENT:	Keywords, describing the content, all the words in this part are from a structured thesaurus.
MEDIA:	types of material, taken from a restricted list, linked together in a structured thesaurus.
AGE PHASE:	Age groups, taken from a restricted list but linked together in a structured thesaurus.
AUTHOR(s):	the name(s) and initials of the author, held in an alphabetical word list.
PUBLISHER:	the names of the publisher, held in an alphabetical word list.
DATAFILE:	the name of the datafile in which the record is held. All the datafile names are held in an alphabetical list.

To use the extended system the user must specify which part of the record is to be searched. e.g. To look in the content thesaurus for castles, type


CO : CASTLES and press #
This specifies, look in the Content thesaurus
This is the word to look for!
Colon, separates part to be searched from the word to look for!

The full list of Age Phase and Media thesauri are published in an considered in detail later in this booklet.

2.2.2 The Search Screen

The Extended Search system has been designed to give the more experienced user additional features whilst still operating within the videotex environment.

The hub of the system is the search screen that enables you to build up a profile of retrieved sets.
It is shown below:

```
NERIS DATABASE                                    0p
  RETRIEVED SET                                   DOCS
1
2
3
4
5                                                 Retrieved set area
6
7
8
9
ENTER 1                                           ) Enter line
                                                  ] Error pointer line
                                                  ] Message area
                                                  ]
                    CO:Content                    }
TI:Title            ME:Media        AP:Age Phase  } Search Commands
DF:Datafile         AU:Author       PB:Publisher  }
                    ? thesaurus  + truncation     ] Reminders
CB:COMBINE          VI:VIEW         DL:DELETE     ] General Commands
RF:REFRESH          HE:HELP         EX:EXIT       ]
```

There are five areas of the screen.

The retrieved set area is where the results of up to nine searches or combinations of searches are displayed when they have been successfully completed.

Below this area is the ENTER line where the user types instructions or commands to the system. Once a command has been successfully carried out the result is displayed as a retrieved set on one of the lines above. Only commands that result in a successful search produce an entry in the retrieved set area of the screen.

Under the enter line is the Error Pointer line. A vertical arrowhead appears on this line under the first invalid character (start of any error) that has occurred when entering a command.

The message area where reports of unsuccessful commands or searches are explained occupies the next two lines below the error line.

The final six lines of the screen show the general and search commands available to the user and indicate the abbreviations that must be used to implement them. Between these two groups of commands is a reminder line, pointing out that the thesaurus facility, and truncated searching are available. These are explained in full later.

2.2.3. The General Commands

EX	Exit from the extended search system e.g. EX:
RF	Refresh the screen to eliminate corruption, (telephone line noise) use this command instead of *00 in the extended system. eg RF:
HE	Request Help eg HE:
DL	Delete a retrieved set (s), or all eg DL: 1 or DL:1,3,5 or DL:ALL
VI	View a retrieved set of documents eg VI:4
CB	Combine a number of retrieved sets together using the boolean operators AND, NOT and OR. eg CB:1 and 2 not 3

2.2.4 The Search Commands

The search commands enable you to specify the thesaurus or word list you wish to search. Having typed the appropriate abbreviation (or code) this must be followed by a colon (:).

eg CO:light. (and press #

will cause the system to search the content thesaurus for the word light.

The following codes identify the search commands and the fields they search.

Code	searches
CO	Content thesaurus
ME	Media thesaurus
AP	Age phase thesaurus
TI	Title word list (alphabetic)
AU	Author word list (alphabetic)
PB	Publisher word list (alphabetic)
DF	Datafile word list (alphabetic)

The searches are performed on two types of list, an alphabetic word list that has no links between the words or a structured thesaurus. (See section, NERIS Thesauri).

The HELP pages

Information in the form of help pages about a particular search field or command is found by typing HE: followed by the code of the command for which help is required and then pressing #

eg for help about the combine command type

HE:CB # or

he:cb # (upper or lower case may be used)

A page of information about the command will be displayed. This applies to the following commands.

Code	Meaning	Type
CB	Combine searches	HE:CB
VI	View sets of documents	HE:VI
DL	Delete sets of documents	HE:DL
HE	Display help text about a given command.	
RF	Refresh the screen to get rid of line noise.	HE:RF

Typing HE: # will bring a general help page.

Help is also available in the same form for the search fields by typing similar commands.

eg for help about the Title search, type

HE:TI #

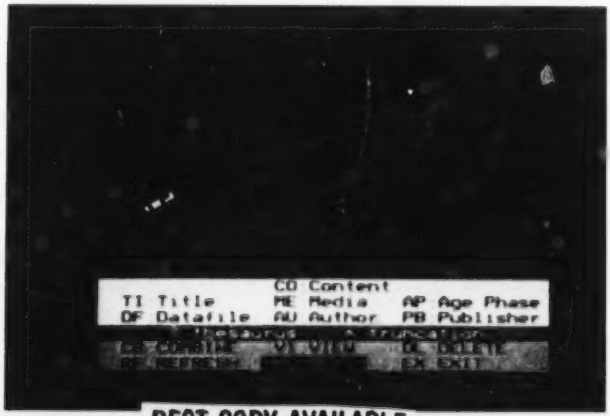
For help about

field	type	field	type
Content	HE:CO #	Author	HE:AU #
Title	HE:TI #	Publisher	HE:PB #
Age Phase	HE:AP #	Datafile	HE:DF #
Media	HE:ME #		

2.2.5 Stem Searching or Truncation

Stem searching or truncation is where only the first letters of the word are typed, followed by a 'wild card'. The system then searches on all words in a particular thesaurus or word list that begin with the letters typed before the 'wild card'. The 'wild card' in the NERIS system is the '+' sign. So typing CO:cons + #

would cause the system to search in the content thesaurus for words beginning with 'cons'. A message would appear on screen with a report of the search stating how many terms or words have been used in the search.



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The number of terms accessed by stem searching in the tutorial software may be less than using the on-line service.

Whilst stem searching or truncation is a very powerful facility it must be used with understanding and care. The twenty two terms used in the search above includes Consonants, Consortia and Constitution as well as Conservation. To enter the thesaurus to check on which terms have been used in the stem search type,

C O : C O N S ? #

This will produce the following screen

The number of documents retrieved by each word will be smaller using the tutorial software.

The rest of the terms in the stem search can be found by looking at the next screen of the word list (i.e. press 8 #).

If you wish to investigate the thesaurus relating to conservation further then type

1 6 V #

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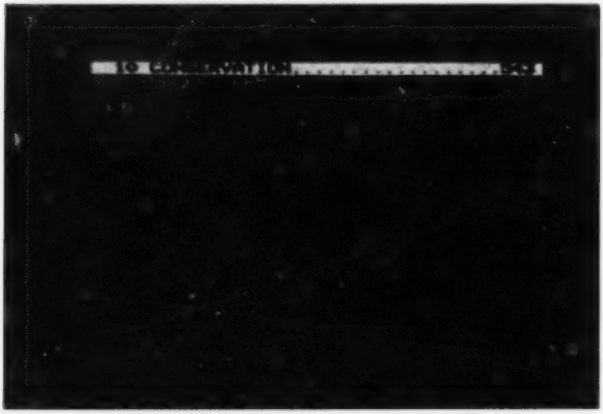
the screen below indicates the information available from the thesaurus.



The number of broader, narrower or related terms will be reduced using the tutorial software.

It is possible to include terms from the thesaurus and word list automatically in a search by typing the number against the term then 'S' and pressing #

eg [1] [5] [S] [#]

or return to the word list relating to one of the terms on the screen by typing

[1] [5] [W] [#]

The number of letters typed before the 'wild card' in stem searching is at the discretion of the user. The greater the number of letters the greater accuracy in searching the terms required.

2.2.6 Combining Searches

When combining searches AND, NOT and OR are available as linking words or operators. AND will narrow the search, NOT will exclude records from the search and OR will broaden the search. The full words need not be used.

AND can be abbreviated to A
OR can be abbreviated to O
NOT can be abbreviated to N

Upper or lower case may be used.

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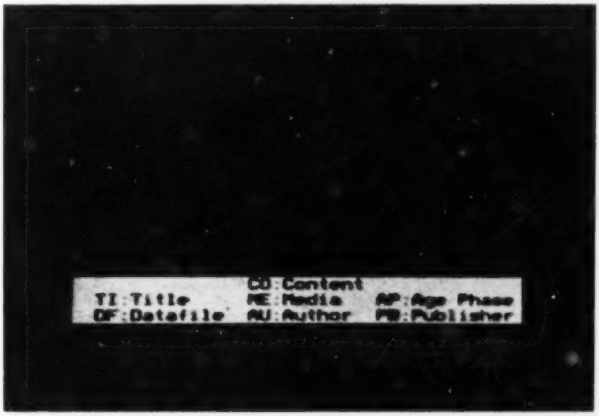
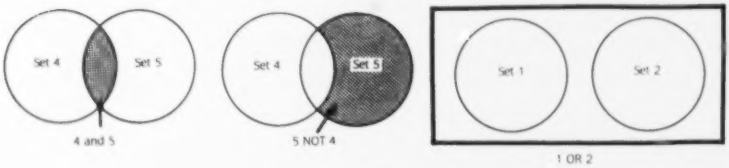
How these combinations work is illustrated below.



We could combine all the searches on the content thesaurus in a number of ways. Pictorially these combinations can be represented as follows:



It is possible to combine more than two sets together. As this becomes more complicated it is necessary to use brackets to ensure that the correct meaning is achieved. The screen demonstrates more complex combinations, which are represented pictorially beneath.

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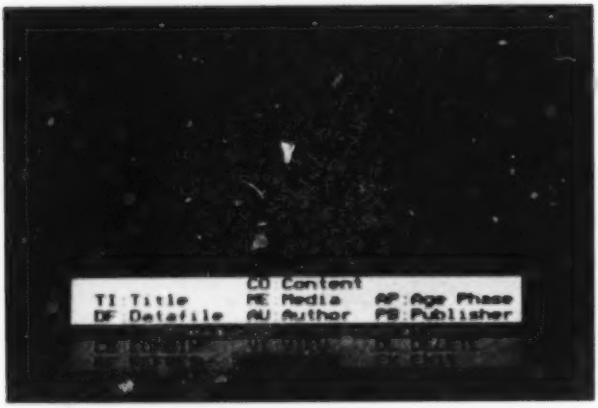

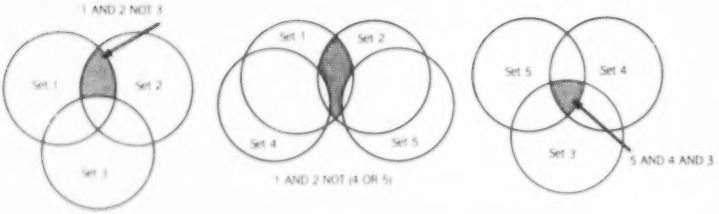

2.2.7 NERIS Thesauri

The NERIS Extended System searches a combination of structured thesauri and word lists depending upon which search command you have used. In simple terms a structured thesaurus (ie Content, Age Phase and Media) is a list of words, all of which are linked to each other by being, narrower broader or related terms of other words in the list. A word list (ie Title, Author, Publisher and Datafile) is an alphabetic list of terms that are not linked in any way.

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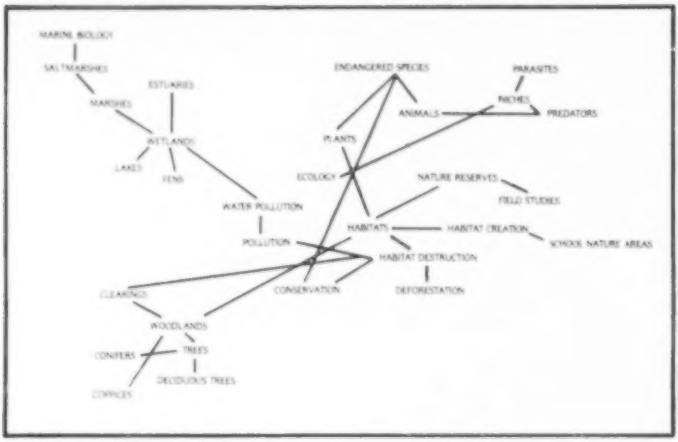
CONTENT THESAURUS



WHY A THESAURUS?

Above is a diagram which might form the basis for a project about habitats. Various concepts which relate to the subject have emerged and lines connecting these have been drawn. A form of concept map has emerged at the planning stage.

The number and type of connections which any two teachers make to any given subject may be different depending on their knowledge of the subject area, and the age group with which they are dealing. For example:

DEFORESTATION might have been related directly to CONSERVATION and to WOODLANDS
PLANTS might have been related to SALTMARSHES
HABITAT DESTRUCTION, HABITAT CREATION and NICHES might have been omitted.

The terms they use might, and most probably will, also be different. For example:

FORESTS instead of WOODLANDS
FIELDWORK instead of FIELD STUDIES
OPEN WATER instead of LAKES
RARE SPECIES instead of ENDANGERED SPECIES
MARINE ECOLOGY instead of MARINE BIOLOGY

As people use different terms to describe the same concepts it is necessary to provide a CONTROLLED VOCABULARY to ensure consistent subject indexing and retrieval.

Similarly, because people make different conceptual links between terms it is helpful to provide relationships between terms in the shape of a THESAURUS. These may be: equivalence relationships, hierarchical relationships or associative relationships.

The NERIS thesaurus provides the following links:

SYNONYMS = equivalence relationships
BROADER TERMS = hierarchical relationships
NARROWER TERMS = hierarchical relationships
RELATED TERMS = associative relationships

SYNONYMS are provided to link PREFERRED and NON-PREFERRED terms. The preferred terms are those KEYWORDS which have been adopted by NERIS to use in indexing documents. The NON-PREFERRED terms are those which have been identified as having the same meaning as the appropriate preferred terms but are not used for indexing. They do provide an ENTRY VOCABULARY as they are recognised by the system. In other words users will retrieve resources which have been indexed using the appropriate KEYWORD by entering a recognised SYNONYM. Examples of synonyms used by NERIS are:

WOODLANDS	SYN	FORESTS
FIELD STUDIES	SYN	FIELDWORK
LAKES	SYN	OPEN WATER
ENDANGERED SPECIES	SYN	RARE SPECIES

Synonym links are a hidden function of the NERIS thesaurus. BROADER, NARROWER and RELATED TERMS are provided by the NERIS thesaurus as conceptual links between terms. They are intended to alert users to associated terms they might not have thought of using in their search and to help users clarify in their own minds precisely what resources they are looking for.

BROADER TERMS (BT) allow users to make their search more general.

NARROWER TERMS (NT) allow users to make their search more specific.

RELATED TERMS (RT) allow users to move into related areas.

If, therefore, a user began a NERIS search with HABITATS they could, by looking at the thesaurus, be alerted to the following relationships. (Note

this is an example and not the full list of relationships from the NERIS thesaurus.)

HABITATS	
NT GRASSLANDS	RT HABITAT CREATION
NT SEASHORES	RT HABITAT DESTRUCTION
NT WETLANDS	RT NATURE RESERVES
NT WOODLANDS	RT PLANTS
RT ANIMALS	RT WILDLIFE

They could then opt to use any of these terms in their search, either instead of, or as well, the original search term. They could also opt to look at the thesaurus relationships for any of these terms.

AGE PHASE THESAURUS

Using the Basic Search System a menu of age phases are available for searching ie.

PRE SCHOOL, INFANT, JUNIOR, MIDDLE, SECONDARY, POST 16.

In order to allow users to be more specific in their searching the following terms can be used in the Extended system.

Term	on the basic system this equates to.
PRE-SCHOOL	Pre-School
Infant	Infant
Lower Junior	Junior
Upper Junior	Middle
Lower Secondary	
Upper Secondary	Secondary
Post 16	
Tertiary	Post 16
Sixth Form	

Age ranges may be searched in the extended system 11-16 which can be sub-divided into 11-14 and 14-16.

MEDIA THESAURUS

The broad bands of media that can be searched using the Basic system are sub divided to allow greater depth of search in the Extended system. The media thesaurus contains the following terms:

Terms available in	
Basic searches	**Extended searches**
Computer	Computer Hardware Computer Software
Audio	Audio Cassette Audio Equipment Radio Broadcast
Visual	Chart Diagram Film Filmstrip Map Microfiche Overhead Transparency Slide TV Broadcast Video Visual Equipment
Printed	Abstract Article Book Booklet Data Sheet Pamphlet Periodical Song Book Teacher Notes Workbook Worksheet

The remaining categories of Media, Equipment, People and Places can be subdivided as shown on the on-line thesaurus. Multi media packs are resources that consist of two or more items of different media.

3 INTERACTING WITH NERIS

The following features are not available using the tutorial software.

3.1 Saving and Downloading Records

Saving NERIS records to be downloaded can take place at different points in an enquiry session. Having saved records on to a disc you can then print or edit them off-line (when not connected to the telephone) to save telephone charges.

NERIS records can be saved in two ways:

(a) As a record for downloading and printing or word processing later, or

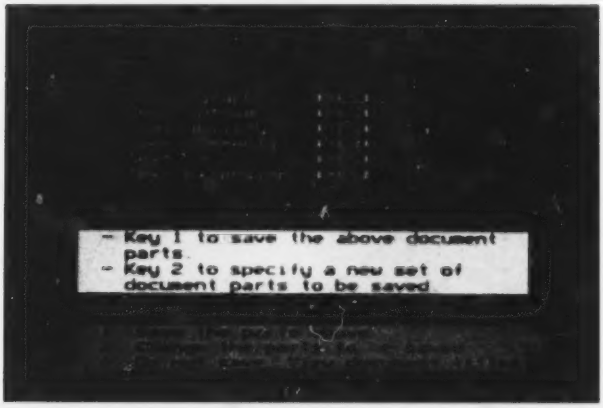
(b) As a viewdata frame to be displayed on a local viewdata system.

SAVING RECORDS TO DOWNLOAD LATER.

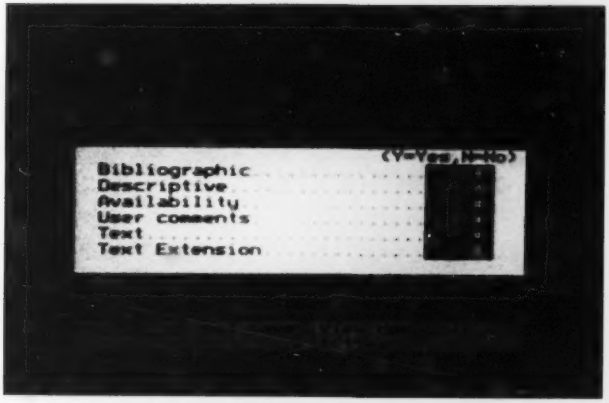
This section deals with the process of saving the records in the NERIS system and the transfer or downloading of them to the users local disc.

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

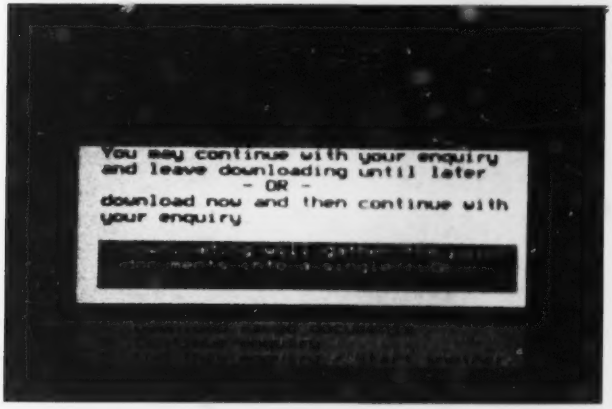
When records are viewed they can be 'saved' (on the NERIS computer) for downloading later by pressing 6, as indicated in the yellow box at the base of the screen. If this option is selected the screen below will appear:



This screen indicates that there is a 'default' setting that 'all' available parts of the record will be saved (ie. press 1). If you wish to change the setting (ie Press 2) you are presented with a 'parts selection' screen, that wants you to indicate YES or NO to each part of the record, depending whether you wish to save that part. Once changed this remains the default until you change it again.



When the parts of the individual record have been saved, the screen will change to show the 'Document Saved' message. From this point you may either download the document (press 1), continue the present enquiry (press 9) or begin a new enquiry (press 0). If you begin a new enquiry, you will be asked to download any records you have saved during the enquiry.


You may continue with your enquiry
and leave downloading until later
- OR -
download now and then continue with
your enquiry

GROUPS OF RECORDS

When a page of titles and media are displayed it is possible to save all those displayed for downloading later. Pressing 6 will request this facility.

The system will give you the option to change the parts of the record to be downloaded (as above). Once the parts have been selected the records are saved to your area on the NERIS computer. If you wish to continue viewing records you may continue your enquiry (press 9), or download the records already saved (press 1) or begin a new enquiry (press 0).

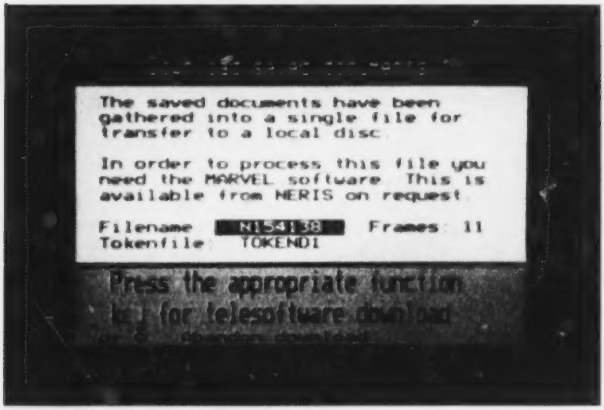
IT IS RECOMMENDED that if you are downloading whole records with long extension texts or records that contain computer files you do so in batches of less then ten records. It may be more efficient with long records of teaching material or computer files to transfer individual records.

DOWNLOADING SAVED RECORDS

(Transferring the file to the users local disc).

If you have tried to save in excess of 10 records or you are finishing an enquiry the system will prompt you to download your saved records.

If you decide to download the file, or if you have requested download before the system requires it you will be presented with the following screen, once your file has been prepared on the NERIS computer.


The saved documents have been
gathered into a single file for
transfer to a local disc.
In order to process this file you
need the MARVEL software. This is
available from NERIS on request.
Filename N154138 Frames 11
Tokenfile TOKEND1
Press the appropriate function
key for telesoftware download

This screen gives the number of frames of information to be transferred and the default file name given by the NERIS computer. Pressing 0 allows you to abandon the transfer, and will give you a menu of options including a second try at downloading, another enquiry, etc.

Pressing the APPROPRIATE FUNCTION KEY FOR TELESOFTWARE DOWNLOAD, will start the transfer process. This key differs between communication software packages. If you have function keys on your keyboards it is often F5. Please consult your software documentation.

Once the process has been started screens of "garbled characters" appear as the file is transferred. Some software packages, store the file in memory and ask you to save at the end, others automatically save. Follow the prompts on your screen, and when saving is complete press # to continue your searching.

Some communications software packages allow the user to change the name that the file is stored under on disc. If it is possible we recommend this is done and the name changed to one of your own choice. The system will automatically provide a filename that is based on the time you asked for the download. This is to avoid confusion.

It is essential when downloading materials from NERIS to ensure that you have sufficient space on your disc to store the information. Some communications software packages allow you to change discs. It is a good idea to have a formatted disc ready for this purpose. You should make the change of discs before going further into the download procedure. If your software does not allow you to change discs, you should ensure that all surplus files have been removed from the disc before logging on to the NERIS database.

If you should have difficulty in downloading the system allows you to try and transfer the documents again.

In order to process your downloaded files you will need the MARVEL Software.

3.2 Response frames

These facilities are not available in the tutorial software.

These are frames or screens that enable you to send messages to NERIS electronically. Eventually you will be able to use them in order to

(a) request information from NERIS.

(b) comment on the use of specific resources.

(c) make suggestions for future sources of information.

(d) point out errors in our information.

or

(e) report difficulties

Future developments may allow the use of this type of frame for ordering inspection copies etc.

These messages will be sent by the NERIS computer to the staff appropriate to deal with them. As the database increases in size and scope greater use will be made of response frames.

4 DISCONNECTING FROM THE DATABASE

When you have completed all the searches that you require you will need to "leave NERIS", and either disconnect the telephone line you have been using or return to NERIS DIRECT ACCESS, PRESTEL or TTNS. Your location in the database when you make the decision to leave will determine the route you take. It will be by pressing a single key usually 0, that will bring you to the NERIS THANK YOU PAGE.

If you have any records saved that you have not downloaded you will be given the opportunity to do so before leaving NERIS. Once the downloading is complete you will be able to leave NERIS as indicated above.

NOTE

Please ensure that you "leave NERIS" by following the instructions on screen, rather that [*] [9] [0] [#] or the 'LEAVE" function of Viewdata software. Also it is requested that you do not leave the database by just pressing reset on your modem as this does not clear your call from the NERIS computer and may hold up other users on the gateway.

The method that brought you into NERIS also determines where you are sent when you leave NERIS.

i.e. If you entered from – PRESTEL you return to PRESTEL
– TTNS you return to TTNS
– DIRECT ACCESS you return to the small database, about NERIS on the British Telecom computer that you logged on to before entering NERIS.

Leaving NERIS

(i) via PRESTEL

The "Thank You" page will have an instructions on to type

[*] [0] [#] for your main index

When you return to your index you can leave PRESTEL by typing [*] [9] [0] [#] .You may also do this using the leave function of your software if it has this facility.

(ii) via TTNS

When you are returned to TTNS the > prompt will re-appear and you will need to leave in the usual way by typing

[O] [F] [ ] at the > system prompt.

(iii) via DIRECT ACCESS

When the NERIS "Thank You" page appears, type

[*] [0] [#]

Once the NERIS "Thank You" page has been replaced on your screen by NERIS menu page, you may select 9 to leave the NERIS pages on the British Telecom computers. The British Telecom "Thank You" page will then appear and you should disconnect your telephone line by either pressing reset on your modem, turn off the power to the modem, switch the on-line button to off-line or use the leave/disconnect function of your software to end the telephone call.

The tutorial software ends at the NERIS "thank you" page.

5 USING SAVED NERIS RECORDS

This should always be done when you have finished communicating with the NERIS computer and have terminated the telephone connection between the two computers, i.e. you are off-line.

5.1 Downloaded records

To make the most of downloaded NERIS records by either wordprocessing or printing requires the MARVEL software that is supplied by NERIS or is available on licence to Education Authorities. Using MARVEL it is possible to print the records or to convert them into a file that can be read by most wordprocessors. (Technically the disc output option of MARVEL creates an ASCII file). Where NERIS records include graphics, datafiles or computer software, MARVEL will offer the user different methods to deal with these. The documentation accompanying the MARVEL disc will help you to do this.

The advantage of wordprocessing the downloaded records is that it allows you to amend the language level of the material to match that of your pupils. This also means that you can add questions, information or assignments dependent upon the use you wish to make of the material.

5.2 In a Viewdata format

If you have used the "save frame" option that is available on some communication packages you can amalgamate the frames into a local viewdata database so that you can look at a small part of the NERIS database without using the telephone line. Refer to your viewdata/communications software manual for the exact details of how to do this. PLEASE REMEMBER you will only be able to store a small number of screens using this method. However it does represent a useful way of collecting information from NERIS for printing or displaying later. Saving frames limits the amount of information that can be saved on to your disc. Not all parts of NERIS records are seen on screen (you can only save the parts of records that are displayed on screen).

WARNING
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Much of the material on the database is free of copyright as long as you are using it in your own school. Always check the Availability part of any record you wish to copy. If there are any copyright restrictions they will be stated in this part. You may NOT use any part of the database to reproduce materials for financial gain. It is worth remembering that whilst the content of the database is very accessible it does actually belong to somebody.